

REMARKS

Claims 1, 7, 22, 23, 29-31, 34-37 and 40 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 40 are amended. No new matter is added by these amendments. Claims 2, 15, 18, 21, 38, 39 and 41 are canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited in those claims. Reconsideration of the application based upon the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The Office Action, in paragraph 2, objects to claim 40 for informalities. Claim 40 is amended to obviate the objection. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to claim 40 is respectfully requested.

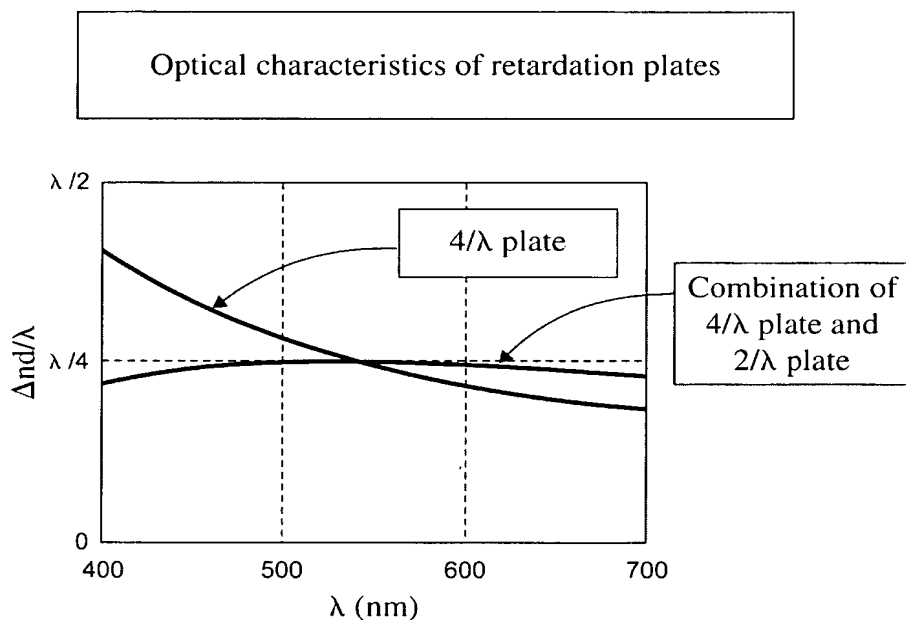
The Office Action, in paragraph 4, rejects claims 1, 2, 7, 15, 18, 21-23, 29, 30 and 34-41 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,753,939 to Jisaki et al. (hereinafter "Jisaki") in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0071070 to Yano et al. (hereinafter "Yano"), and in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,201,592 to Terashita et al. (hereinafter "Terashita"). Additionally, the Office Action, in paragraph 5, rejects claims 1, 2, 22, 29-31 and 37 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0055082 to Cubo et al. (hereinafter "Cubo") in view of Jisaki, Yano and Terashita. The Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

While asserting that Jisaki teaches many of the features as positively recited in pending claim 1, the Office Action concedes that Jisaki does not explicitly disclose that the sum $W1$ satisfies $0.5 \times Rt \leq W1 \leq 0.75 \times Rt$, and that $nx1 > ny1 > nz1$ and $nx2 > ny2 > nz2$, as positively recited in pending claim 1. The Office Action relies on Yano to overcome this deficiency in Jisaki.

Additionally, the Office Action asserts, as positively recited in pending claim 1, that Jisaki teaches the retardation films are $\lambda/4$ plates in the visible wavelength range, so

$R(450)/R(590)$ is smaller than 1, as positively recited in amended claim 1. This assertion is incorrect for the reasons discussed below.

In order to make the assertion that Jisaki teaches the retardation films are $\lambda/4$ plates in the visible wavelength range, so $R(450)/R(590)$ is smaller than 1, as asserted in the Office Action, an assumption must be made that $\lambda/4$ plates have equal retardation optical characteristics for all wavelengths of light. That is, in the ideal situation, $R(450)/R(590)$ is equal to $(112.5 \text{ nm} / 145.7 \text{ nm})$, which is smaller than 1. However, as shown in the below graphic, the optical characteristics of actual $4/\lambda$ plates vary with wavelengths (λ) of incident light, with retardation ($\Delta n d / \lambda$) larger for smaller wavelengths.



For this reason, Jisaki uses the $4/\lambda$ plates, as illustrated in Fig. 5, retardation films 2 and 3, in combination with $2/\lambda$ plates, retardation films 1 and 4, to improve the uniformity of the optical characteristics as shown in the attached drawing. Therefore, since Jisaki's $4/\lambda$ plates are the well-known type that need to be used with $2/\lambda$ plates, the ratio $R(450)/R(590)$ is greater than 1. Therefore, Jisaki cannot reasonably be considered to teach the features as positively recited in amended, independent claim 1.

The applied prior art references of Kubo, Yano and Terashita, in any permissible combination with Jisaki, do not overcome the deficiency as discussed above.

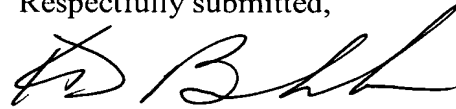
For at least the above reasons, any permissible combination of applied prior art references cannot be considered to teach, or even to have suggested, the combinations of all the features recited in at least independent claim 1. Further, claims 7, 22, 23, 29-31, 34-37 and 40 are also neither taught, nor would they have been suggested, by the applied prior art references for at least the respective dependence of these claims on allowable independent claim 1, as well as for the separately patentable subject matter that each of these claims recites.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the subject matter of claims 1, 2, 7, 15, 18, 22, 23, 29, 30 and 34-41 as being unpatentable by any permissible combination of the applied prior art references, are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 7, 22, 23, 29-31, 34-37 and 40 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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